

16 July 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Staff Meeting Minutes of 16 July 1979

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The Director chaired the meeting. []

Stein, in response to the Director's interest, said he is trying to get a copy of the Moscow New Times which alleges CIA infiltration of the UN in Geneva; he said allegations are false. The Director said he does not intend a counter move on the Soviet allegations but wants the facts in order to advise appropriate U.S. officials. []

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Taylor reported that, despite efforts to head it off, OMB has forwarded a 1981 Community guidance figure of [] The Director said he has already signed the memo prepared by [] requesting the OMB guidance figure be somewhere between []

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Hetu reported that a 9,000 word article on intelligence by Tad Szulc of the New York Times is scheduled for publication 29 July. He added we will receive an advance copy. []

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Bowie commented briefly on NFAC's first publication of CONTRA, an internal magazine designed to elicit dissenting views among analysts. []

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Bowie provided to the Director an NFAC report on the Southeast Asia refugee situation, noting its high quality. He said the report was requested by Ambassador Dick Clark who is in charge of refugee affairs at State. []

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Hitz discussed with the Director several format problems concerning the Director's SALT testimony tomorrow before the SFRC. Hitz noted that Bill Bader, SFRC Staff Director is coordinating the problems with Chairman Church. The Director asked that [] Stoertz, and Hineman accompany him and that he be provided any new items that are significant toward SALT hearings this week. []

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[] reported he was informed late last week that, in response to our request, Justice has asked the FBI to begin a preliminary investigation into the Richard Burt (NYT) leak. He also noted a letter prepared by Silver for the Director's signature asking the Attorney General to pursue a civil suit against Jack Anderson in seeking return of classified documents. []

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Wortman reported briefly on the following:

-- Modification to the Cable Dissemination System for increased message storage and processing capabilities will be completed by 23 July. 25X1
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-- An increase in car pooling has been noted; interest in van pooling is being surveyed; and energy committees have been formed in each Directorate and are attempting to stimulate ideas for greater conservation of energy. 25X1

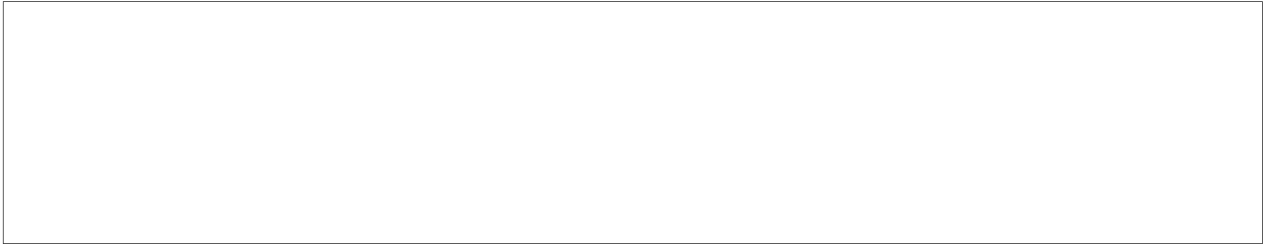
Dirks reported that:

-- NPIC conducted a quick analysis over the weekend to find image quality to be exceptionally good 25X1

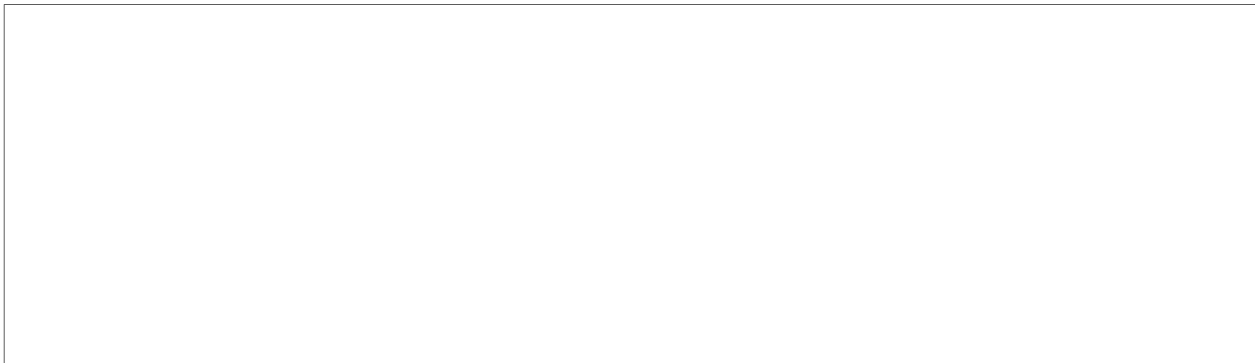
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-- The Defense Dissemination Program is now operational at SAC. 25X1

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- He congratulated Bowie on the favorable view given by the New York Times on the closeness of NFAC reporting to China's own report on its economic situation.
- He noted to Bowie problems created by the 12 July memo from Dr. Brzezinski on "The World Oil Market in the Years Ahead;" he said he has sent to Bowie for preparation of response.
- The Director called attention to an article in the Sunday Washington Post Book Review section: Nuclear Disaster in the Urals by Zhores Medvedev (attached).
- The Director called attention also to an item in today's Executive Summary. According to a chart in the International Defense Review, the Soviets appear to have overtaken the U.S. in submarine technology.
- The Director commented on another Executive Summary item: Decision by a Federal Judge in New York granting payments of legal fees and court costs to a Mr. W. H. Ferry re CIA delays in response to Ferry's FOIA request. 25X1
 explained the circumstances. 25X1



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Attachment

SECRET

NUCLEAR DISASTER IN THE URALS By Zhores A. Medvedev. Translated by George Saunders. Norton. 214 pp. \$12.95

By WALTER C. PATTERSON

ZHORES MEDVEDEV stands better than most the meaning of scientific integrity. As a leading Soviet geneticist he wrote a book about Stalin's scientific charlatan, T. D. Lysenko; the publication led to Medvedev's imprisonment in a

WALTER C. PATTERSON is the author of *Nuclear Power*.

psychiatric hospital, and the subsequent withdrawal of his Soviet citizenship. Since 1973 Medvedev has lived in exile in London. In November 1978 he contributed to the British magazine *New Scientist* an invited article about Soviet dissident scientists. The article mentioned that one reason for the tension between Soviet scientists and their government was a "tragic catastrophe" in the Urals region in 1958, an "enormous explosion" at a storage site for nuclear waste which "poured radioactive dust and materials high up into the sky," affecting tens of thousands of people and killing hundreds.

A few days after the article appeared, a reporter asked Sir John Hill, chairman of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, for his comments. Sir John responded that the story of such a nuclear accident

was "rubbish," "pure science fiction," and "a figment of the imagination." Sir John's comments were widely quoted in British and foreign media. Medvedev was dumfounded. To vindicate himself Medvedev undertook a personal investigation of the Urals accident. *Nuclear Disaster in the Urals* is his report. It is matter-of-fact, understated and utterly convincing, and it grips the reader like an intellectual thriller, building inexorably to a haunting conclusion.

Medvedev begins by recounting the reactions to his original article. He "had no idea that western experts were uninformed" about the Urals accident; but his passing comment about it elicited a fusillade of denials and exegeses from nuclear and intelligence authorities in several countries.

(Continued on page 4)

Nuclear Disaster in the Urals

(Continued from page 1)

Medvedev points out that intelligence agencies, preoccupied with "secret" information, "are often unable to make thoroughgoing and effective use of information open to the public." He thereupon declares his intention "to give these analysts and experts a small lesson in scientific detective work." As a "small lesson" it is a tour-de-force.

In 1958 an old professor of Medvedev invited him to work at one of the secret installations set up following the accident to study the effects of radioactivity on the region. But Medvedev would have had to submit to comprehensive censorship, including a ban on publication, and he refused. However, he knew the names of former associates who did involve themselves in studies of radiobiology in the area of the accident. Those names subsequently vanished from scientific publications until the late '60s, when censorship eased enough to permit publication of scientific research papers based on investigations after the accident. Such papers had to disguise or obscure the basis for the work, and refer always to "experimental" radioactive contamination of waterways, land, animals, birds and plants in unspecified locations. Medvedev sought out these papers, identifying their "omissions, distortions, falsifications and anomalies"

compared with orthodox radioecological papers; he then fitted together the evidence from the distorted papers into a mosaic from which the full extent of the disaster could be plausibly inferred.

Medvedev demonstrates that the levels and distribution of contamination, especially by strontium-90, in bodies of water, land areas and samples of animals, are far greater than any responsible scientist would—indeed, could—investigate experimentally. Medvedev compiles persuasive evidence that the unstated location for these investigations was the region near the secret Chelyabinsk-40 nuclear installation—a conclusion reinforcing the eyewitness account from Professor Lev Tumerman, whose letter to the *Jerusalem Post* in December 1978 focussed additional interest on the issue.

Perhaps the most startling information in this cumulatively awesome collation concerns reports of an "experiment" involving radiation exposure so intense that it killed entire stands of mature trees, and killed younger trees in only three years. The effect was worse "on the windward side" of the forest. An "experiment"? As usual, not even such basic data as the location of the "experiment" was given. This investigation was reported during radioecology sessions at the Geneva conference on peaceful uses of atomic energy in 1971. The reports of such a study might have been expected to invite major questions on methods and general principles; but

about these papers not a single question was asked. Medvedev notes, without comment, that the chairman of the session was Sir John Hill.

Medvedev also includes commentary on a number of CIA reports and discussions which have since come to light; facsimiles are included in the book. Medvedev points out that they exhibit many internal inconsistencies and contradictions, when they are not "sanitized" into uselessness. Nevertheless such CIA material continues to play a part in efforts by the international nuclear community to discredit Medvedev. After Medvedev's visit to the Los Alamos laboratory, its director, Harold Agnew, and long-time nuclear proponent Edward Teller discounted Medvedev's findings and challenged him to produce "concrete evidence about the alleged disaster." Teller in particular can hardly be unaware of Medvedev's circumstances as a Soviet exile; and it remains unclear what sort of evidence such critics would consider "concrete." Stanley Auerbach and his colleagues at Oak Ridge have also published a report taking issue with Medvedev's deductions.

Medvedev has long since shed any illusions about scientific integrity in the Soviet Union. He is now entitled to harbor similar doubts about the West, at least when it comes to potential nuclear embarrassments. Those with open minds should read *Nuclear Disaster in the Urals* and draw their own conclusions. □